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ABSTRACT

The Parent Involvement Program (PIP) was designed to promote the active and continuing participation of individual parents in the education of their children, as well as a partnership with the schools their children attend. An evaluation of PIP focused on its planning and implementation and determined the program's effectiveness in meeting its goals. Eighteen PIP programs were evaluated. The results of the evaluation indicated that generally all PIP programs were implemented as planned. There was a variation in the activities offered by component, school level, and type of program organization. Parents participating in PIP included those targeted by the policy statement; that is, they were parents of: children at risk in academic performance; children living in temporary housing; children with medical and health needs; and children in underserved areas with high concentrations of ethnic and/or racial minorities. Almost unanimously, coordinators and providers reported that PIP was effective in increasing parent involvement. Effective PIP programs used a school-based coordinator, had school staff who contributed their knowledge and expertise, included social gatherings, offered activities as a series of workshops, presented activities in parents' schools, employed funding from public and private agencies, and offered activities to meet needs of target parent populations. (ABL)

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EVALUATION SECTION REPORT

John E. Schoener, Chief Administrator

January 1990

Evaluation Section Report

PARENT INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM (PIP)

1988-89

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PARENT INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM
(PIP)
1988-89

SUMMARY

The Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment (OREA) conducted an evaluation of the second year of the Board of Education's Parent Involvement Program (PIP). The purpose of PIP was to promote the "active and continuing participation of individual parents in the education of their children, as well as a partnership with the schools their children attend." The evaluation focused on the planning and implementation of PIP and determined the program's effectiveness in meeting its goals. In addition, OREA identified organizational practices and characteristics of programs and activities that were particularly effective in promoting parent involvement.

In 1988-89, the Board of Education allocated $1 million for 34 PIP programs serving parents of children from elementary to high schools throughout New York City in four components: 1) ten PIP programs continuing from 1987-88; 2) 17 new PIP programs; 3) five Parent Orientation Programs (POP) for parents of children in grades K to 3; and 4) two programs organized by community-based organizations (C.B.O.s): Advocates for Children and the Church Avenue Merchants Block Association.

The 34 programs were organized in three modes: as individual school programs, district- or boroughwide programs, and community-based programs. Programs were to utilize public and private sector support wherever possible.

The goals of PIP as specified by the PIP policy statement of 1987 were:

- to promote opportunities for parents and school personnel to join together in the educational process;
- to enable parents to recognize the need to optimize the parent/child relationship and develop skills to help their children;
- to promote maximum success for children.

The sample consisted of 18 PIP programs: six continuing from 1987-88, eight new in 1988-89, two POPs, and two C.B.O. programs. Fourteen PIPs were elementary/junior high school programs, four were high school programs; nine programs were organized by individual schools, seven by districts or boroughs, and two by community organizations.

PLANNING

During the months of May and June, OREA consultants visited most sample sites at least twice and visited C.B.O. sites three or four times. Consultants interviewed 18 program coordinators and 49 providers of 40 activities, and surveyed 400 parents participating in PIP activities. Analyses of the data combined both qualitative and quantitative techniques.

OREA found that in the planning phase PIP coordinators generally complied with

the mandate to collaborate with school staff to develop their program. Coordinators reported they received assistance from teachers, principals and assistant principals, support staff and others who helped develop the PIP proposal, contributed their knowledge of parents' needs, and utilized their professional expertise to design and eventually provide PIP activities. More than two-thirds of the coordinators conducted a needs assessment in their schools or districts to determine what kinds of activities parents were interested in. Coordinators reported they also complied with PIP's mandate in utilizing community resources and public and private agencies as a source of potential speakers and materials for their activities.

IMPLEMENTATION

Generally all PIP programs were implemented as planned. However, many activities did not begin until after December due to delays in funding prompted by a lengthy approval process that required the Board of Education and the New York City budget office to review applications before funds were released to the districts. The delay was exacerbated in some cases by the districts which failed to disburse the funds in a timely manner.

Once activities began, coordinators and providers proved to be flexible in modifying their programs to accommodate the needs of parents. PIP activities fell into five types: parenting skills, adult education, parents as educators, telephone helpline, and social activities. OREA found there was variation in the activities offered by component, school level, and type of program organization. C.B.O. PIP programs concentrated on adult education; POPs and continuing PIP programs concentrated on parenting skills and adult education; and new PIP programs offered more helpline and social activities. The majority of activities offered by individual school programs were social and helpline activities. The district and borough programs offered the bulk of their activities in the areas of parenting skills and adult education.

Parents participating in PIP included those targeted by the policy statement: parents of children at risk in academic performance, children living in temporary housing, children with medical and health needs, and children in underserved areas with high concentrations of ethnic and/or racial minorities. Many of these parents participated for the first time in any school activity. C.B.O.s were more effective than the other components in attracting these hard-to-reach populations because of an intensive outreach effort in collaboration with school principals to identify parents who could benefit from PIP, and encourage them personnally to attend.

Almost unanimously, coordinators and providers reported that PIP was effective in increasing parent involvement. However, more coordinators in individual school programs reported an increase in parent involvement than did those in district or community programs. Coordinators and providers observed that PIP strengthened parents' relationship with the school and with their children. PIP also empowered some parents to become an active force in their own lives, their children's lives, and their communities. PIP staff observed that the PIP social activities such as field trips, social and cultural events were particularly effective in promoting these benefits.

Problems arose as a result of the delays in funding. Coordinators and providers often had to pay for materials themselves

to get the PIP activities started. Another problem was getting parents to attend the activities. Coordinators commented they would like to devise methods to attract more parents.

OUTCOMES

The outcomes demonstrate that PIP was successful in meeting its goals. Sixty-one percent of the parents indicated that their participation in PIP had benefitted them by promoting the home/school partnership; 55 percent reported that PIP had enhanced their children's success in the classroom; and about 50 percent said that PIP had improved their relationship with their children and their ability to help their children with school work.

Over 75 percent of the parents reported they were satisfied with the program overall. In assessing specific areas in which PIP helped parents, OREA found that 43 percent of the parents said PIP helped them work with their children at home; 45 percent said it helped them educate themselves; and 26 percent indicated it had empowered them to take leadership roles in the school or community. Parents reported they felt more comfortable visiting their children's school and that they helped their children more often with school work after participating in PIP.

The findings show that individual school PIP programs and elementary/junior high school PIP programs consistently provided more benefits in all three program goals than district and community programs, and high school programs. The school programs provided these higher benefits by offering social activities which gave teachers, parents, and children the opportunity to participate together in social events, field trips, and cultural activities. Parents reported that these activities contributed more than any other type of PIP activity to breaking down the barrier between home and school, to improving their relationship with their children, and to enhancing their children's success in the classroom.

CONCLUSIONS

OREA's evaluation of the 1988-89 PIP program contributes further evidence that building a community of parents, educators, and children at the school level is an effective way to educate children. Effective PIP programs shared the following characteristics.

- A school-based coordinator administered the program.
- Coordinators and providers participated in the planning and implementation.
- School staff contributed their knowledge and expertise.
- Outside public and private agencies furnished resources.
- PIP staff offered activities to meet the needs of target parent populations and demonstrated flexibility in modifying activities once they began.
- Activities took place in the parents' schools.
- Activities were offered as an ongoing series of workshops rather than as single events.
- Social activities were included in the program offerings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, OREA makes the following recommendations.

- Streamline the approval and funding process so that PIP begins early enough in the school year to have an impact on parent involvement.
- Establish a school-based coordinator, if not provided, to plan and implement PIP at the school level.
- Arrange a meeting of all PIP coordinators to share experiences and insights.
- Use outreach methods to identify individual parents, especially hard-to-reach parents, and encourage them to attend PIP activities.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment (OREA) conducted an evaluation of the second year of the Board of Education's Parent Involvement Program (PIP) for the 1988-89 school year. The purpose of PIP, according to the Board of Education's PIP policy statement of October 1987, was to promote the "active and continuing participation of individual parents in the education of their children, as well as a partnership with the schools their children attend." Thirty-four parent involvement programs operated throughout New York City during the 1988-89 cycle.

BACKGROUND

In September 1987, the Board of Education received an $800,000 grant from the City of New York to fund a Parent Involvement Program. City Comptroller Harrison Goldin earmarked $200,000 of the grant for a Parent Orientation Program (POP), for parents of children in grades K to 3, which was to be administered by community school districts. The purpose of POP was "to increase parents' understanding of their children's curriculum, interests, and needs. . . (and) to help parents understand how they can enhance their children's skills at home." The remaining $600,000, was allocated by the Board of Education for two other components: 1) an individual school and district/borough component, and 2) a community-based organization (C.B.O.) component.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

In 1988-89, the second year of the program, New York City increased its PIP grant from $800,000 to $1 million, adding $200,000 to be used at the Chancellor's discretion. The Board of Education circulated a Request for Proposals (R.F.P.) to all schools at the

beginning of the school year asking for applications. Applicants were encouraged to design their parent involvement programs to meet the needs of their particular parent populations and collaborate with school personnel and public and private agencies in planning and implementing them.

After reviewing proposals, the Board of Education allocated the funds for the 1988-89 PIP cycle as follows: $260,000 for six individual schools and four districts/boroughs continuing their parent involvement programs from 1987-88; $340,000 for 14 new individual school programs and four new district/borough programs; $200,000 for five POP programs continuing from 1987-88; and $200,000 for two new C.B.O. programs: Advocates for Children (A.F.C.) and the Church Avenue Merchants Block Association (CAMBA).

The individual school PIPs and district/borough PIPs served parents of elementary, intermediate, and high school children; POPs offered activities for parents of elementary school children; CAMBA served parents of elementary school children, and A.F.C. provided activities for parents of high school children.

The Board of Education specified that parents served by PIP should include the hard-to-reach populations of parents who rarely or never participated in any school activities:

- parents of children at risk in academic performance;
- parents of children living in temporary housing;
- parents of children with medical and health needs; and
- parents of children in underserved areas with high concentrations of ethnic and/or racial minorities.

Individual school parent involvement programs operated in their schools; district/borough programs and POPs provided activities at centrally-located school sites or at district offices; and C.B.O. programs operated at school sites, outreach centers, and hotels for homeless families.

PROGRAM GOALS

The R.F.P. circulated by the Board of Education outlined the goals that PIP was to meet in promoting the involvement of parents in the school life of their children. PIP was to:

- promote opportunities for parents and school personnel to join together in the educational process;
- enable parents to recognize the need to optimize the parent/child relationship and develop skills to help their children; and
- promote maximum success for children.

SCOPE OF THE REPORT

The following OREA evaluation focuses on the planning and implementation of a sample of parent involvement programs and determines how successfully they fulfilled PIP's goals. OREA measured outcomes in terms of the benefits reported by parents in the three program goals listed above: the home/school partnership, the parent/child relationship, and success for children. OREA identifies organizational practices, program characteristics, and activities that were particularly effective in promoting parent involvement.

Due to the short duration of PIP (one academic year), OREA did not measure success for children in terms of academic achievement. The majority of PIP personnel felt they were not sufficiently knowledgeable about the students of parents participating

in PIP to assess changes in their academic performance, attendance, or attitudes toward their parents. However, they did feel sufficiently knowledgeable to comment on changes in students' social behavior and attitudes toward school because they had opportunities to observe these characteristics during PIP activities in which parents and children participated together. Consequently, for the purposes of this evaluation, OREA defines success as an improvement in children's social behavior and attitudes toward school as reported by PIP coordinators and providers. The evaluation does not compare the level of parent involvement before and after PIP, nor the characteristics of parents who participated compared to these who do not due to the fact that school personnel do not collect attendance information for parent activities.

II. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

OREA conducted its evaluation of the PIP program by interviewing a sample of PIP coordinators and activity providers, and by distributing surveys to parents participating in a sample of PIP activities. These data provided information about the effectiveness of programs and activities in increasing parent involvement and enhancing children's success in the classroom.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

In order to determine how schools, districts, POPs, and C.B.O.s designed and implemented PIP and whether they met the program's goals, OREA considered the following questions:

Organization and Planning

- How was the program organized?
- What parent populations were targeted and how were they identified?
- How did planners determine parents' needs?

Implementation

- Who coordinated and provided PIP activities?
- What kinds of activities were implemented?
- Did programs receive support from school personnel? from public and private agencies?
- Who participated in PIP activities?
- What were the program's strengths and weaknesses?

Outcomes

- To what extent did PIP promote opportunities for parents to: enhance the home/school partnership? optimize the parent/child relationship? help children be successful in the classroom?
- Were parents satisfied with PIP?
- Did parents feel they and their children benefited as a result of PIP?
- Did parents change their attitudes about involvement in their children's education as a result of PIP?

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Sample

The sample consisted of 18 programs from the four component categories: continuing programs, new programs, POP, and C.B.O. programs in four of the five boroughs of New York City.* The sample included 14 elementary-junior high school programs (two were junior high schools), and four high school programs. Nine PIPs in the sample were organized by individual schools, seven were organized by districts or boroughs, and two by community organizations. Program types included in the sample were six PIPs continuing from the previous year, eight new PIPs, two POPs continuing from 1987-88, and two new C.B.O.s. OREA consultants interviewed 18 program coordinators and 49 providers of 40 activities, and surveyed 400 parents participating in PIP.

Instruments

OREA designed three evaluation instruments: two open-ended interview forms, one for PIP coordinators, the other for providers of PIP activities, and a parent survey

*PIP activities in Staten Island had been concluded when OREA initiated its field work.

questionnaire both in English and Spanish. These instruments focused on program planning, organization, implementation, perceptions of program effectiveness, and the benefits for parents and children. The interview instruments also posed questions to coordinators and providers about changes in children's attitudes and behavior as a result of their parents' participation in PIP. The instruments were piloted at three sites.

Data Collection

OREA consultants interviewed all 34 PIP coordinators in May and visited each sample site at least twice, and C.B.O. sites three or four times during May and June. They observed 40 PIP activities and interviewed 49 providers. (More than one provider was interviewed at some sites.) The consultants administered parent surveys at the beginning or end of the workshops they observed, with the assistance of the providers. For activities that involved a telephone helpline, PIP providers distributed and collected the parent surveys themselves and sent them to OREA. Thirty-nine of the parent surveys were too incomplete to analyze, leaving a total of 400.

Data Analysis

The qualitative responses given by providers and coordinators in open-ended interviews were manually coded and tabulated. Frequencies of these responses were determined to permit comparisons between four component categories, the 40 activities (which were divided into five groups; parenting skills, adult education, parent as educator, helpline, and social activities), and the three different types of program organization (school-based, district, and community). The parent questionnaires were manually coded and keypunched, and cross-tabulations were generated by component type, program type, activity, and school level.

III. FINDINGS

PROGRAM ORGANIZATION AND PLANNING

Coordinators' Role

In most programs in the sample, school or district administrators or C.B.O. directors selected personnel to coordinate PIP. For the most part, PIP coordinators were teachers, staff developers, and district or school administrators. One PIP coordinator was a parent. The majority of PIP coordinators shared the following characteristics which enabled them to make significant contributions to program planning: they were members of the school staff and based in the school; they were involved in initially conceptualizing the program; and they were knowledgeable about parents' needs.

The majority (12) of the programs were administered by coordinators based in individual schools. In the nine individual school programs, PIP coordinators were school personnel administering PIP activities in their schools. Of the seven PIP district/borough coordinators, three assigned school-based personnel to coordinate PIP activities in selected schools on a regular basis. Only in the remaining four district programs and the two C.B.O. programs was PIP administered without a school-based coordinator.

All but four of the 18 coordinators reported they participated in some phase of the PIP planning process. Half the coordinators reported they developed and wrote the PIP grant themselves or collaborated with others. Coordinators generally reported they received substantial support in the planning phase from school principals, teachers, S.B.S.T. members, and guidance counselors who were in a position to be knowledgeable about the needs of parents in their schools. The majority of the coordinators said that some school staff members participated in the planning process; four said that parents

had contributed to the planning; and three said they received help from the central board.

As the PIP policy statement required, coordinators depended on several sources to design their programs. The majority of coordinators (two-thirds) conducted a needs assessment or parent survey to determine what kinds of activities parents were interested in; about a third consulted the schools' parent association or school staff. PIP coordinators said they also collaborated with principals, teachers, and support staff in the schools who shared their knowledge of parents' needs in order to develop PIP activities. Some coordinators said they designed their programs around the expertise of particular teachers, guidance counselors, family assistants, or social workers who they then recruited as providers of the activities. Coordinators also drew upon the resources of public and private agencies in the community to identify potential speakers and other sources of support.

Providers' Role

More than half the 49 PIP providers reported they participated in some phase of the planning process, whether it was a school, district, or community administered program. A small number of providers (29 percent in the school programs; 34 percent in district programs) were not involved in planning. In many cases these providers were engaged in the PIP program only after the proposal had been submitted or they were hired from outside agencies.

Flexibility in Planning

Among the eight PIP programs in the sample refunded from 1987-88, all but one of the coordinators reported modifying their program for 1988-89. Several coordinators reported that they had changed their program to respond more directly to parents' needs.

At one elementary school, the coordinator reported that because parents needed job skills, she initiated a new series of workshops in computers. The coordinator of a junior high school PIP responded to parents' requests to concentrate on a single topic by offering a series of 12 workshops on nutrition, instead of offering a series of workshops on a variety of topics as she had done in 1987-88.

In district programs, at the parents' request, the coordinator of the District 75/Citywide program reported expanding the focus of PIP activities in her district from children with emotional handicaps to include children with a wider variety of handicaps. One POP program offered completely new activities in 1988-89 at the request of schools in the district who were going to be participating in PIP for the first time in 1988-89. The coordinator of a district PIP in Manhattan reported that she had decided to structure her program more tightly in 1988-89 for administrative purposes. "Last year, we encouraged every school to do its own thing based on each school's parent needs assessment. This year, we offered all the schools the same menu of ten activities to choose from."

Target Population

The policy statement issued by the Board of Education specified that PIP target its activities to hard-to-reach populations of parents, parents of children with medical and health needs, parents of children living in temporary housing, parents of children in areas with high concentrations of ethnic and/or racial minorities, and recent immigrants. Coordinators of the 18 programs in the sample complied with this directive, designing a variety of activities they felt would attract these populations. Almost half the coordinators reported they designed their programs for parents of limited English proficiency; six said they targeted black and Hispanic parents; and four directed their activities toward the

entire parent population of their schools or districts which satisfied the program mandate to meet the needs of parents in underserved areas with high concentrations of ethnic and/or racial minorities.

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Staff

About two-thirds of the coordinators in the sample reported they acted as facilitators overseeing the implementation of PIP. Five of these said they also selected providers, made arrangements for training them, and supervised their activities. Five of the coordinators reported they utilized their own expertise to present PIP workshops.

The majority of PIP providers were school staff (teachers, social workers, guidance counselors, paraprofessionals). Sixty-five percent were school staff members; 27 percent were supplied by outside agencies, and 12 percent were parents. Coordinators selected providers primarily on the basis of their experience in the topics or areas to be addressed by the proposed PIP activities and their commitment to promoting parent involvement.

The coordinator of one C.B.O. program selected providers who were representative of the parent populations they were instructing. For example, an Asian man was hired to teach E.S.L. classes to the predominantly Asian male participants; an Hispanic woman taught E.S.L. to Hispanic women; a female black childcare worker presented activities for mothers living in hotels and their pre-school children. OREA observed that these C.B.O. providers were caring and sensitive to the needs of the parents and conscientious about reaching out to the community to involve other parents. They were able to establish a close rapport with several new immigrant groups.

OREA consultants observed similar dedication in many of the other PIP providers.

Providers generally were enthusiastic about PIP and committed to the idea of parent involvement. They demonstrated their commitment to PIP in that one-fifth of them volunteered their services.* One provider commented, "Many teachers have volunteered to do workshops." Another said, "(School staff) volunteered time willingly for all services!" Said one teacher who volunteered, "It was such fun. It makes it easier as a teacher to have parents understand what children are doing; then parents can really help."

Program Start-up

Generally, all sample PIP programs were implemented as planned. Most programs began operating in the fall but due to delays in funding some PIP activities did not begin until after December. A lengthy approval process which required the Board of Education and the New York City budget office to review applications held up the release of PIP funds to the community school districts. In some cases the delay was exacerbated by the districts which did not disburse the funds in a timely manner. One POP program concentrated its entire program in three workshops offered in the month of May. In those programs that started later in the school year, providers found it more difficult to mobilize parents and get them to participate in PIP on a regular basis. Even if parents participated, a program beginning in May could have little impact on increasing parent involvement in the school or on parents' ability to improve their children's academic performance for the current school year.

Another difficulty, coordinators reported, was finding suitable locations to provide PIP activities. A series of five C.B.O. workshops planned for parents living in temporary

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*About one-fourth of the providers received per session compensation; the others received some other form of compensation.

housing had to be discontinued after two sessions because of flooding in the basement of the hotel where workshops were held. In one case, a C.B.O. program was unable to hold its E.S.L. classes in the schools as planned because there was no space available; classes were held in several local churches instead.

Flexibility in Implementation

Once their programs began, coordinators and providers proved to be flexible in modifying their parent involvement activities to accommodate parents' needs. For example, a suicide in one high school resulted in a PIP workshop responding to parental concern about teenage suicide. Providers in one of the C.B.O. programs reported they modified the workshops for parents living in hotels in response to their requests for help with children's needs outside school. Providers of another activity in the same C.B.O. recognized that the Asian immigrants in their E.S.L. classes were literate in their native languages so they raised the level of instruction accordingly. Providers in the other C.B.O. program accommodated parents by moving PIP activities out of schools which were not in the parents' communities to more accessible locations.

The majority of coordinators reported that PIP activities were coordinated with other school activities, usually P.T.A. events. Coordinators said they used opportunities such as parent-teacher conferences and P.T.A. meetings to funnel parents into PIP workshops or orientation sessions scheduled following these events.

PIP Activities

The kinds of activities offered to fulfill PIP's goals fell into five types: parenting skills, adult education, parents-as-educators, social activities, and a helpline providing direct communication between schools and parents. Workshop sessions in parenting

skills and adult education represented 60 percent of all the activities observed.

- **Parenting skills** workshops included discussions on topics such as death, divorce, drugs, and alcohol, sexual and child abuse, children's self-esteem, and home and leisure activities for handicapped children.
- **Adult education** workshops offered parents instruction in computers and clerical skills, English as a second language, nutrition, and managing stress.
- **Parents-as-educators** workshops taught parents skills which would enable them to help their children with homework and tutor them at home.
- **Social activities** were cultural events, field trips, or recreational activities in which parents, teachers, and children participated together.
- **Telephone helpline** activities established a direct communications link between parents and the school.

In parents-as-educators workshops, parents wrote a curriculum guide to inform other parents in their district about the skills and subjects their children would be studying in grades K to three. The social activities included a field trip to Lincoln Center to attend a ballet, a parent awards dinner at a Manhattan restaurant, and a weekly morning coffee hour before school for parents and teachers. The coordinator and four providers (a resource room teacher, computer teacher, social worker, and the school librarian) of an elementary school PIP in Manhattan organized a three-day seminar at the Pocono Educational Environmental Center for teachers, parents, and children. Together they attended workshops about parenting skills and homework help, and participated in recreational activities such as canoeing and hiking.

The telephone helpline was a new feature of PIP in 1988-89, and was offered solely in new programs, including the two C.B.O.s. The helpline operated in several high school PIPs as a resource and referral center for parents of children in crisis. At an elementary school in Brooklyn, the helpline was geared to non-English speaking parents who,

because of their language, were isolated from the school community. The parent coordinator of this program determined that Chinese (Mandarin), Spanish, Urdu, and Russian were among the most common languages spoken in the school. One day per week, a parent fluent in English and one of these languages operated a special PIP telephone in the school to answer parents' questions, translate school notices, or communicate information from teachers about particular children.

Responding to Parents' Needs. Table 1 presents a breakdown of the types of activities provided by program component as reported by parents participating. There was variation among the four components in the types of activities offered. While adult education was the only activity offered by all four components, C.B.O.s concentrated on adult education more than the other components. All components except for C.B.O.s offered activities in parenting skills. POP and continuing PIP programs concentrated on parenting skills and adult education, and new programs offered more helpline and social activities.

Elementary/junior high school PIPs offered activities of all five types but responded to the needs of its predominantly early childhood parent population by offering the majority of PIP activities in the area of parenting skills. High school PIP programs provided workshops exclusively in the areas of adult education and social activities. These activities were suited to parents of older children who were likely to have more possibilities to pursue their own education and development.

Table 2 presents a breakdown of the PIP activities provided, by type of program administration. The majority of activities offered by individual school PIPs were social and helpline activities. The district/borough PIPs provided the majority of activities in the areas of parenting skills and adult education.

Table 1

Parent Reports of Activities Provided, by Component[a]

(In Percent)
(N=399)

Activity Provided	COMPONENT			
	Continuing	New	POP	C.B.O.
Parenting Skills	42.8	33.3	40.6	0.0
Adult Education	31.3	11.1	32.4	90.7
Parents-as-Educators	9.8	8.7	27.0	0.0
Helpline	0.0	23.2	0.0	9.3
Social	16.1	23.7	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(112)	(207)	(37)	(43)

Source: OREA parent questionnaire

[a]Based on responses from a sample of 40 activities in 18 programs.

- *Only adult education activities were offered in all four components.*
- *C.B.O. programs concentrated on adult education; POPs and continuing programs concentrated on parenting skills and adult education.*
- *New programs offered more helpline activities and social activities.*

Table 2

Parent Reports of Activities Provided,
by Type of Program Organization[a]

(In Percent)

Activity Provided	TYPE OF PROGRAM ORGANIZATION School	District/Borough
Parenting Skills	16.3	59.6
(N)	(30)	(102)
Adult Education	17.9	21.6
(N)	(33)	(37)
Parents-as-Educators	15.8	5.8
(N)	(29)	(10)
Helpline	21.2	5.3
(N)	(39)	(9)
Social	28.8	7.6
(N)	(53)	(13)
Total		
(N)	(184)	(171)

Source: OREA parent questionnaire

[a]C.B.O.s are omitted because they appear as a component on the previous table.

- *Individual school programs offered more social activities than any other type.*
- *District/borough programs offered the majority of activities in the area of parenting skills.*

Format and Scheduling. PIP activities occurred in several formats: as a series of workshops presented on a regular basis and as a single lecture or workshop presented at one centrally located site or repeated at different times and at different sites. About 81 percent of the individual school programs and 63 percent of the district/borough programs presented their PIP activities as a series of workshops on an ongoing basis. On the other hand, single events were much more prevalent in district programs (16 percent) than in individual school programs (6 percent). The single lecture format reached an extreme in one POP program, which provided 9:00 A.M., 3:15 P.M., and 5:00 P.M. workshops at the same site on the same topic.

Public and Private Sector Support

About two-thirds of the coordinators reported they fulfilled PIP's mandate to collaborate with public and private sources to implement their programs. They utilized the resources of the Board of Education, social service agencies, community organizations, city agencies, private business and charities, and local colleges and universities to furnish speakers and resources.

Almost unanimously, providers reported they received support from school staff in implementing PIP activities. In the individual school PIPs, providers said they had the cooperation of the principal, assistant principal, classroom teachers, and school support personnel. In the district/borough programs, often the deputy superintendent collaborated with the PIP coordinator at the site where the PIP activity took place. In a high school program the provider said, "The principal, AP, the superintendent's office, they're always there for us, a cast of support services and resources; we work together." Providers of community-based PIPs reported that the principals of schools they targeted

for workshops were cooperative for the most part. "The principals were eager to get the parents in their schools involved in PIP activities and they identified parents who might benefit. They provided space in the school when available for PIP workshops, and helped publicize them."

Reaching Target Parents

Coordinators as well as providers made extensive efforts to reach target parents and encourage them to attend PIP workshops. Some teachers and social workers personally contacted parents whom they felt could benefit from PIP and invited them to participate. C.B.O. coordinators were especially diligent in recruiting hard-to-reach parents. The coordinator of one C.B.O. called upon the school principals to identify needy parents in the community and then approached these parents directly to encourage them to attend. A few PIPs offered special incentives to increase participation. POP programs included money in their budgets to pay parents attending workshops a nominal weekly stipend for transportation and babysitting expenses. Coordinators of one school-based PIP required parents to sign a contract committing themselves to attend a specified number of workshops.

Providers indicated they used a variety of methods to publicize the program. Some used the school's parent association to notify parents about PIP. Flyers distributed throughout the schools and word of mouth were popular methods. In order to reach target parents, providers reported they translated notices into Spanish and other languages which included Russian, Creole, Korean, Urdu, and Chinese. Providers also used the telephone to call parents individually, sent notices through the mail, and hung posters around the school and community. In some schools, providers went out into the

school yard before and after school to recruit parents for a specific PIP workshop. More than half the activities observed were advertised through at least two different methods, and many were advertised more than once with follow-up reminders.

PARENT CHARACTERISTICS

Demographics

Parents participating in PIP activities reported the following characteristics:

CHARACTERISTICS	PERCENT[a] (N=399)
New to the school	35.7
New to U.S.	9.2
Non-English speaking	23.0
Living in temporary housing	3.5
With health problems	11.0
On public assistance	38.7
Single parent	38.7
Working full-time	28.2
High school graduate	55.2

Source: OREA parent questionnaires

[a] Figures add up to more than 100 percent because parents selected more than one characteristic to describe themselves.

Parents reporting they were high school graduates attended PIP activities in the greatest number (55.2 percent). The hard-to-reach parent populations targeted by the PIP policy statement did not participate to this extent: 3.5 percent responding reported they were families living in temporary housing and 11 percent said their families had special medical and health needs; 9.2 percent reported they were immigrants, and 23 percent reported they were non-English speaking. These four populations participated to a greater extent in C.B.O. programs than in other PIP components which suggests that C.B.O.s were more effective in reaching these parents than the other components, a

consequence, perhaps, of their intensive and personalized recruiting practices.

Previous Participation in Child's Education

Most of the parents attending PIP activities who responded to OREA questionnaires indicated they were already actively involved in their children's education before they participated in PIP. Forty-two percent of the parents reported that they had visited their child's school 11 or more times; 39 percent visited three to ten times. Fourteen percent of the parents reported they had visited rarely or not at all before PIP began. For this 14 percent, the PIP program was either the first time or one of the few times they attended any school activity.

Before participating in PIP activities, the majority (65 percent) of parents reported that they felt comfortable visiting the school, while ten percent did not. The reasons for parents' visits were primarily voluntary: to speak to school personnel (58 percent); to participate in school events or duties (53 percent); or to participate in school activities with their children (42 percent).

About half the parents responding reported they helped with their children's school work. Fifty-four percent of the parents said they felt competent to help their children with their school work. Clo .e to half the parents (48 percent) said they helped their children 11 or more times per month; 24 percent helped rarely or never.

Participation in PIP

The number of ; arents attending PIP activities ranged on average from ten to 25 for each workshop, but as many as 150 attended some activities. Of the 14 PIPs continuing from the previous year, more than three quarters of the providers reported an increase in parent participation in 1988-89. In some workshops, children participated

along with their parents. At one school-based PIP in the Bronx, children were released from their classrooms to attend part of a discussion about sexual and child abuse. Children at another school-based PIP attended an after-school workshop with their parents about drugs.

Parents in the target groups participated to varying degrees in the five types of activities. Table 3 presents the percent of parents participating in PIP activities by their characteristics. Parents in three of the four hard-to-reach categories (living in temporary housing, new to the U.S., and non-English speaking) participated most frequently in adult education and helpline activities. Parents with health problems, single parents, and parents receiving public assistance attended social activities more frequently than the others. Parents participating in parents-as-educators workshops more often than other activities tended to be new to the school as well as new to the U.S., and parents of young children. Parents with high school diplomas attended parenting skills workshops more frequently than other activities.

PERCEPTIONS OF PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

Promoting Parent Involvement

Coordinators generally agreed that the 1988-89 PIP was successful in promoting parent involvement. Almost unanimously they reported that PIP was effective in increasing the number of parents volunteering in the school and attending parent-teacher conferences and other school activities. Said one school-based coordinator, "For eight and a half years we tried everything to get parents into the school. Now I see parents in school all the time." Coordinators noted that the visible presence of a few parents in the school encouraged other parents to become involved. "Parent volunteers make it

Table 3

Parents Participating in PIP Activities,
by Characteristics

(In Percent)
(N=399)

Parent Characteristics (N)	TYPES OF ACTIVITIES				
	Parenting Skills (132)	Adult Education (109)	Parents-as-Educators (39)	Helpline (52)	Social (67)
New to school	35.6	34.9	43.6	28.8	38.8
New to the U.S.	4.5	11.9	17.9	17.3	3.0
Living in temporary housing	2.3	5.5	5.1	1.9	3.0
With health problems	11.4	10.1	2.6	5.8	20.9
On public assistance	34.8	39.4	41.0	19.2	59.7
Non-English speaking	9.1	33.9	33.3	48.1	7.5
Full-time work	22.7	25.7	23.1	51.9	26.9
Single parent	43.9	32.1	41.0	19.2	52.2
H.S. graduate	67.4	48.6	59.0	53.8	40.3

Source: OREA parent questionnaire

- *Parents in three of the four hard-to-reach populations (living in temporary housing, new to the U.S. and non-English speaking) participated most frequently in adult education and helpline activities.*
- *Parents with health problems, single parents, and parents receiving public assistance attended social activities more frequently than other activities.*

easier for other parents to come into the school," commented another coordinator.

More coordinators in individual school programs reported an increase in parent involvement than did those in district or community programs. In citing the reasons for the success of school-based programs, coordinators noted that their programs had responded to parents' needs; school-based PIP activities brought parents into their children's schools where they could get to know and trust school staff. At the same time, school-based activities attracted school staff as providers and brought them into contact with parents. "PIP invited the enthusiastic involvement of all the constituents in the school community: parents, teachers, children, and administrators; everyone was involved," said an elementary school coordinator.

Coordinators of the district and C.B.O. programs cited similar benefits for parents. As a result of PIP involvement, parents felt more comfortable going into their children's schools and making contact with school personnel. C.B.O. coordinators said their PIPs were successful because they offered services to parents that schools could not, such as counseling and other social services.

Only one coordinator did not feel that PIP resulted in a significant increase in parent involvement. Coordinating a junior high school program in the Bronx, continuing for the second year, she observed a decrease in parents participating in 1988-89. She felt that parents of junior high school children were generally less involved in their children's schools than parents of elementary school children. She also reported that the PIP activities she planned for 1988-89 did not respond to parents' needs. "I'd go back to what we did last year--a monthly workshop on a variety of topics--rather than concentrating on one topic covered too deeply and too often."

There was some indication that the PIP coordinators' perceptions of success were

related to the degree to which they were personally involved in program implementation. Two-thirds of the coordinators reporting an increase in parent involvement were involved in all phases of PIP: writing the proposal, planning, and implementation.

Meeting Program Goals

To determine if PIP was effective in meeting its goals (promoting the home/school partnership, the parent/child relationship, and children's success in the classroom), OREA asked coordinators and providers in interviews to respond to questions about changes in parents' and children's attitudes and behavior since PIP began.

Home/school Partnership. Coordinators and providers generally reported that PIP had helped improve the home/school partnership in several ways. First, PIP improved parents' attitudes toward school. All the coordinators and all but two of the providers noted that parents felt more positive about their children's teachers, more trusting, and were less reluctant to approach school personnel for information or to discuss problems after participating in PIP. (Two providers responding felt there had been no change.) Because school personnel were often providers of PIP activities, "Parents got to know the teachers as people," explained one coordinator. "PIP helped break down the stereotype parents have about schools as sitting in judgment and criticizing them and their children," commented another.

OREA found that PIP also met the goal of strengthening the home/school partnership by providing benefits to the schools. First, coordinators and providers were grateful to parents who offered their services to the school and classroom as volunteers. Secondly, school staff participating in PIP said that their contact with parents in this context made them aware that parents really do care about their children's education.

Teachers said they became more sensitive to the problems facing parents and therefore more understanding and tolerant of the children. This understanding led to their perception of parents as partners rather than adversaries in the educational process and laid the foundation for parents and teachers to work together as a team.

Another factor reinforcing the home/school partnership was the bond and sense of trust PIP created among parents. Most of the coordinators and providers responding noted that parents' relationships with one another improved significantly as a result of their participation in PIP workshops. One coordinator described the changes she observed, "In the beginning, parents were so isolated; they came into the room alone and sat down silently in their seats; they didn't even take off their coats. By the end of the year parents were saving seats and translating the lectures for one another."

Providers observed that parents attending PIP activities often developed friendships and frequently socialized with each other and their children after school hours. "Parents learned they were not alone with their problems," said the coordinator of the District 75/Citywide Program. "Parents formed core groups that were very supportive and worked together to solve their problems." Another coordinator observed that parents "reached out to social service agencies together as buddies to get help for their families and themselves."

Parent/Child Relationship. According to frequency responses on the interview instruments, about half the coordinators and providers responding observed an improvement in parents' relationships with their children since PIP began. They described parents as taking more responsibility for their children's behavior. In an art workshop series for parents and their children, the provider noted a growth in the parents' awareness of their children's needs which consequently improved their relationship with

their children. Providers also commented on parents' increased participation in their children's learning. "Parents are more involved now in pursuing after-school classes and other enrichment activities for their children," commented one coordinator-provider. One father, estranged from his family, used PIP activities at his son's school as an opportunity to spend time with his son.

Success for Children. About half the coordinators and a fourth of the providers noted an improvement in children's attitudes toward school and improvement in their behavior in the school environment since their parents began participating in PIP. As one provider of a school-based PIP commented, children responded to the presence of their parents in the school as a restriction on anti-social behavior. "It's difficult to cut school if you know that your parent or even a neighbor will be in school that day." Several providers commented on the improvement in children's attitudes and behavior during PIP social activities in which children accompanied parents and teachers on field trips. Providers also observed that children had increased their interaction with their parents and teachers. (Two providers responding felt there had been no change in children's attitudes toward school and only three felt there had been no change in children's social behavior.)

In evaluating changes in children's relationships with their parents as a result of PIP, many coordinators and providers observed that children were glad to have their parents participating in PIP. "The kids love it when their parents come into the school," said a coordinator. "They're proud that their parents are going to school and doing homework too." In a PIP workshop for pregnant teenagers and their mothers, a coordinator observed that it had helped one girl understand her mother's anger toward her. Children also enjoyed attending PIP workshops. "Children are very excited about

participating in activities with their parents," said a provider.

Additional Successful Features

In addition to meeting the program's goals, providers cited other features of PIP which they felt contributed to the program's success. These included promoting interaction among parents, linking parents to the school, and empowering parents to become active participants in other aspects of their lives.

Parent Interaction. Providers found that an unexpected benefit of PIP was the opportunity it gave parents to establish a dialogue with each other. For parents of handicapped children who travel from all over the city by bus to attend their schools, PIP activities provided an opportunity to meet the parents of their children's classmates and share their problems. "PIP created a very family feeling for parents," said one provider.

Providers observed that PIP activities also brought together parents and children of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The experience increased their understanding and tolerance of one another. In one elementary school, the provider noted that PIP workshops helped ease the tension in the community between two hostile ethnic groups.

Providers in several programs responded to parents' growing curiosity about each others' traditions by collaborating with the parents to organize end-of-the-year projects which celebrated cultural differences. These projects included an international cookbook at one elementary school in Brooklyn and international festivals with food, music, and traditional costumes at several elementary and high schools in Queens. The PIP social activities were particularly effective in promoting parent interaction. Commented one of the providers who organized the three-day field trip, "Hiking, campfires, eating together,

experiences like these bring parents together - talking, sharing."

Linking Home and School. Providers commented that PIP was particularly effective in opening up communication between parents and the school. PIP social activities enabled parents to establish a dialogue with their childrens' teachers by becoming acquainted with them in a relaxed atmosphere outside the context of school. The PIP helpline provided a sympathetic resource for parents in the school, someone who could respond personally to parents' concerns and direct them to the appropriate school personnel or social service agencies outside the school if necessary. "The helpline gave parents the feeling that the school staff cared about them and their children," commented a provider.

A PIP program providing helpline information services in four languages relied on parents to provide this activity. These parents were paid for their work as school aides. As a result of their involvement in the PIP helpline, they became active members of the school's parent association and their contact with other parents in their ethnic communities brought more parents into the school.

Empowering Parents. Coordinators and providers commented that participation in PIP activities had empowered some parents to become more active in their school or community. Almost all the coordinators reported that the number of parents involved in school activities increased in their school or district. More than half the coordinators reported that the number of parents attending PA meetings increased; a third noted an increase in the number of parents working in the classroom and school office.

At one elementary school which did not have an active parents association, a provider reported that parents participating in PIP workshops organized a P.T.A. A provider in a C.B.O. program was very proud of the fact that one of the formerly non-

English speaking parents in his E.S.L. class became a member of the school's parent association. A parent in another elementary school became an organizer for tenants' rights and active in other community organizations as a result of her participation in PIP.

For other parents, PIP provided the impetus to venture beyond the boundaries of the community. Said one provider-coordinator, "PIP gave parents the courage to leave the Bronx, expanding their own horizons as well as their children's." Providers of adult education workshops reported that E.S.L. classes and instruction in computers and clerical skills had empowered parents to go back to school or go out and look for a job. "Even their personal grooming improved," observed a provider. "They wore nice clothes and put on make-up."

Field trips to museums and historical sites exposed parents to cultural experiences that filled gaps in their own development at the same time they learned how to direct their children to these kinds of activities. Many of the parents attending the three-day workshop at the Pocono Educational Environment Center participated in sports and other recreational activities they had never experienced before. For some of the mothers, the trip was the first time they had been away from their families. They discovered they could function without their spouses and other children, and that their families could manage at home without them.

Problematic Features of PIP

The most frequent complaints among coordinators and providers about PIP concerned the lengthy application approval process which created delays in funding (some programs received funds as late as May) and heightened the uncertainty of not knowing early enough in the school year if PIP grants would be awarded. Coordinators

felt there was not enough time for PIP to have an impact on parent involvement if activities began too late in the year.

Another problem PIP staff cited was low parent attendance, particularly among the hard-to-reach populations. While PIP personnel proved to be flexible and responsive in accommodating parents' needs, they wanted to attract these populations in greater numbers. The contract system organized in one school seemed to be effective in getting parents to attend PIP; the remuneration offered by POP was not always successful. Improving child care arrangements was a must according to several providers who reported that their workshops were disrupted by the presence of babies and pre-school children attending with their parents.

Evening meetings were also problematic, said some coordinators. Parents did not like going out in certain neighborhoods or traveling to central locations in their districts or boroughs at night to attend workshops. Other programs, however, found evening meetings convenient for working parents. The coordinator of the District 75/Citywide Program commented that workshops were better attended when they were held in their children's own schools.

Suggestions for Future PIPs

Coordinators, providers, and parents, particularly those in continuing programs, offered suggestions for improving PIP and encouraging more parents to attend in the future:

- plan regular meetings among all PIP coordinators to share ideas;
- offer both A.M. and P.M. sessions;
- permit children to attend with parents or offer child care;

- use multiple methods of notifying parents and use reminders a few days before the event;
- offer refreshments;
- offer more handouts (including books, school supplies);
- display names/pictures of PIP participants on school bulletin boards; and
- set up a parent resource room in the school.

OUTCOMES

Parents' Perceptions

Almost 75 percent of the parents completing OREA surveys were satisfied overall with PIP. Parents implied they wanted more input in designing PIP activities. Only half reported that they had been asked to suggest activities they would like to include in PIP; 73 percent requested more and different PIP activities for the following year.

Parents found the scheduling of PIP activities to be satisfactory; they said that PIP activities were held at convenient times and locations. However, parents found child care arrangements organized by PIP to be less satisfactory; only 29 percent who required child care reported it was provided; and 24 percent of the parents indicated that although they required child care, it was not available.

Close to half the parents responding found that PIP helped them work with their children at home and educate themselves. Since PIP began, more parents became involved in their children's schools in some capacity. However, about half the parents might have been predisposed to being involved because they already participated to some extent in their children's education.

Parents participating in PIP were representative of the target populations such as parents new to the school, parents receiving public assistance, and single parents. The

hard-to-reach target populations such as families living in temporary housing and families with health problems, immigrant and non-English speaking parents participated in fewer numbers, but previously these populations had not participated at all.

Benefits to Parents

To determine if the PIP activities met the program's goals, OREA evaluated the responses of 400 parents completing surveys about their participation in PIP. Parents answered questions on a scale of one to five about the benefits they derived from PIP in the three areas designated by the PIP policy statement as program goals: enhancing home/school partnership, optimizing the parent/child relationship, and maximizing success for children.

Responses reveal that PIP was effective in achieving its goals by providing benefits in all three categories. The majority (61 percent) of parents indicated that their participation in PIP had benefited them by promoting the home/school partnership. Fifty-five percent of the parents responding felt that PIP activities had contributed to enhancing their children's success in the classroom. About half (50 percent) mentioned that PIP activities had improved their relationship with their children and enhanced their ability to help their children with school work.

Evaluating the kinds of parents who benefited from PIP activities, OREA found that parents of all characteristics more frequently mentioned benefitting from PIP by facilitating the home/school partnership. Parents of all characteristics indicated receiving slightly fewer benefits in improving the parent/child relationship.

In assessing in which specific areas PIP had helped parents, OREA found that 43 percent of the parents responding said that PIP enabled them to help their children with

their homework; 45 percent said that PIP activities had helped them educate themselves; and 26 percent indicated that PIP had empowered them to take leadership roles in their school or community. OREA also found that parents' involvement in their schools and communities increased slightly since PIP began. Parents reported that 37 percent became involved in the school's parent association, 24 percent became school volunteers, 22 percent enrolled in adult education courses, and five percent became paid school employees.

Characteristics of Effective PIPs

The data demonstrate that certain program characteristics contributed to the effectiveness of PIP. Table 4 presents a breakdown of benefits parents reported receiving from PIP in the three program goals by type of program organization. The data show that school-based parent involvement programs were consistently more effective in providing benefits to parents than district and community programs. Parents participating in school-based PIPs consistently reported receiving higher benefits in all three program goals: promoting the home/school partnership, optimizing the parent/child relationship, and enhancing success for children.

The school level also proved to be significant in the effectiveness of PIP. Table 5 presents a breakdown of benefits reported by parents by school level. Parents attending workshops in elementary/junior high school PIPs consistently reported having benefited more from PIP in all three program goals than parents in high school PIPs. These results may be attributed to PIP, but might also be due to differences in the population of parents attending elementary/junior high school programs and high school programs.

Table 4

Parent Reports of Benefits,
by Type of Program Organization

Type of Benefits	TYPE OF PROGRAM ORGANIZATION					
	School		District/Borough		Community	
	Mean	(N)	Mean	(N)	Mean	(N)
Home/School Partnership	4.46 SD = .87	(152)	4.14 SD = .96	(129)	4.13 SD = .79	(41)
Parent/Child Relationship	4.18 SD = 1.03	(151)	4.03 SD = .90	(126)	3.52 SD = 1.04	(43)
Success for Children	4.18 SD = 1.12	(152)	3.79 SD = 1.23	(134)	4.07 SD = .91	(43)

Source: OREA parent questionnaire

- *School-based programs promoted more benefits in all three program goals than district or community administered programs.*

Table 5

Parent Reports of Benefits,
by School Level

Type of Benefits	SCHOOL LEVEL: Elementary/Junior High Mean	(N)	High School Mean	(N)
Home/School Partnership	4.29	(271)	4.25	(51)
	SD = .92		SD = .84	
Parent/Child Relationship	4.12	(268)	3.59	(52)
	SD = .98		SD = 1.02	
Success for Children	4.07	(277)	3.70	(52)
	SD = 1.11		SD = 1.32	

Source: OREA parent questionnaire

- *Elementary/junior high school programs provided more benefits in improving the home/school partnership, parent/child relationship, and promoting success for children than high school programs.*

OREA analyzed the breakdown of benefits to parents by component, and presents the outcomes in Table 6. The data derived from parent questionnaires show that continuing PIPs were more effective in promoting the home/school partnership and parent/child relationship than the other components. The success of continuing programs in achieving these two program goals is logical in that it takes time to build and improve relationships. PIPs continuing for the second year had one year more to make an impact on enhancing parents' relationships with their children and their children's schools than new programs.

Parents participating in new programs and C.B.O. programs, however, reported more benefits in maximizing children's success than did parents in the continuing and POP programs. The greater benefits to children's success reported by parents in these components may be due to the fact that the parents were participating for the first time in a parent involvement activity. Parents in C.B.O. programs, because they were more alienated from the school community, initially may have had more negative attitudes about their involvement than parents participating in other PIP components. With no previous involvement, parents participating in C.B.O. and new PIPs may have perceived their mere attendance as a positive influence on their children's performance.

Some PIP activities were more successful than others in promoting PIP's goals. Table 7 presents a breakdown of benefits reported by parents according to the type of activity they attended. Parents participating in social activities indicated that these activities were consistently the most effective in achieving all three program goals: enhancing the home/school partnership, optimizing the parent/child relationship, and promoting success for their children. The effectiveness of the PIP social activities in all three areas can be explained by the fact that these activities tended to bring together all

Table 6

Parent Reports of Benefits,
by Component

Type of Benefits	PIP COMPONENT Continuing Mean	(N)	New Mean	(N)	POP Mean	(N)	C.B.O. Mean	(N)
Home/School Partnership	4.43 SD = .75	(95)	4.32 SD = .93	(161)	3.88 SD = 1.29	(27)	4.11 SD = .78	(40)
Parent/Child Relationship	4.21 SD = .87	(90)	4.11 SD = 1.01	(163)	3.78 SD = .98	(26)	3.51 SD = 1.05	(42)
Success for Children	3.98 SD = 1.14	(96)	4.07 SD = 1.20	(162)	3.73 SD = 1.29	(30)	4.05 SD = .91	(42)

Source: OREA parent questionnaire

- *Continuing programs provided more benefits in promoting the home/school partnership and parent/child relationship.*
- *New programs and C.B.O. programs provided more benefits in promoting children's success.*

Table 7

Parent Reports of Benefits,
by Activity

Type of Benefit	ACTIVITY				
	Parenting Skills	Adult Education	Parents as Educators	Helpline	Social
	Mean (N)	Mean (N)	Mean (N)	Mean (N)	Mean (N)
Home/School Partnership	4.21 (99) SD = .93	4.11 (92) SD = .96	4.30 (30) SD = 1.01	4.15 (41) SD = 1.00	4.77 (60) SD = .45
Parent/Child Relationship	4.19 (97) SD = .90	3.60 (92) SD = 1.10	4.14 (32) SD = 1.01	3.92 (41) SD = .92	4.49 (58) SD = .76
Success for Children	3.90 (101) SD = 1.23	3.80 (96) SD = 1.14	4.05 (33) SD = 1.16	3.87 (41) SD = 1.10	4.63 (58) SD = .86

Source: OREA parent questionnaire

- *Social activities promoted more benefits in all three program goals than other types of activities.*

the constituents of the school community--teachers, parents, and children. Increased contact among these groups evidently led to a broader understanding and more open communication among them for the purpose of improving children's education.

Changes in Parents' Attitudes Before and After PIP

In an effort to determine what improvement, if any, PIP activities contributed to the degree of parent involvement, OREA posed a number of "before PIP" and "after PIP" questions in the parent questionnaire. Parents were asked to rate on a scale of one to five whether or not they felt comfortable visiting their child's school before and after they participated in PIP. It appears that PIP activities made a significant difference in improving the level of comfort parents felt in visiting their child's school. Parents in all program components felt more comfortable visiting their child's school after attending PIP activities.

OREA also asked parents whether they felt able to help their children with homework before their involvement with PIP and whether they had learned any skills through PIP activities that were useful in helping their children with homework. Parents in all program categories reported an increased ability to help their children after they participated in PIP. When asked to compare how often they actually helped their child with school work before PIP and after PIP, parents in all program components reported increased involvement in homework after participating in PIP.

Summary

The outcomes demonstrate that PIP achieved all three program goals. PIP was most effective overall in strengthening the home/school partnership. School-based programs and elementary/junior high school programs were consistently the most effective in achieving all three PIP goals. PIP provided consistently greater benefits in

these programs through its social activities which gave parents, teachers, and children the opportunity to participate together in social events, field trips, and cultural activities. Parents reported these activities contributed more than other types of PIP activities to breaking down the barriers between home and school, to improving their relationship with their children, and to enhancing their children's success in the classroom.

Continuing programs, perhaps because they had two years to make an impact on parent involvement, provided more benefits in promoting the home/school partnership and the parent/child relationship. New programs and C.B.O. programs provided more benefits in maximizing success for children.

An analysis of the change in parents' attitudes before and after PIP reveal that it was effective in strengthening parents' involvement in their children's education. Parents in all program components felt more comfortable visiting their child's school, helping their children with homework, and increased the amount of time they actually spent doing it.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

All parent involvement programs in the sample receiving grants for 1988-89 were implemented, despite delays in funding which postponed some activities until after December. OREA found that PIP was successful in increasing the amount of parents' involvement in their children's education and achieving the program's goals.

Whether administered by individual schools, districts or boroughs, or community-based organizations, the most successful PIP programs were planned and implemented in a collaborative style. Coordinators and providers pooled their expertise, marshalled both public and private support and resources, and contributed their awareness of parents' needs to plan and present activities that encouraged parents to participate in PIP. Staff of PIPs continuing from 1987-88, as well as new PIPs, proved to be flexible enough to modify their programs in the planning and implementation phases to accommodate parents' needs and interests.

Parents attending PIP activities were representative of the program's target populations. With their intensive and personalized outreach practices, the C.B.O. programs were most effective in recruiting hard-to-reach populations such as parents living in temporary housing, parents with health problems, and immigrant and non-English speaking parents.

The outcomes based on parent reports demonstrate that PIP was successful in achieving all three program goals: enhancing the home/school partnership, optimizing the parent/child relationship, and maximizing success for children. Evaluating PIP's effectiveness by component, school-level, and type of administration, OREA found that

PIP was consistently most successful overall in strengthening the home/school partnership. The findings show that individual school-based programs and the PIP social activities were consistently most effective in achieving all three program goals.

Over 75 percent of the parents responding rated PIP very positively. Close to half indicated that PIP had helped them by enabling them to work with their children at home and by giving them opportunities to educate themselves. After participating in PIP, parents in programs of all characteristics reported an improvement in their relationship with the school, confidence in their ability to help their children with homework, and an increase in the amount of time they actually spent working with their children at home.

The findings suggest that successful PIP programs shared several characteristics.

- Coordinators and providers participated in the development, planning, and implementation phases of their programs.
- School personnel supported the programs.
- Outside public and private agencies furnished resources such as speakers, curricula, and printed materials.
- Coordinators and providers offered activities that met the needs of the target populations and demonstrated the flexibility to modify their programs once they began.
- Activities took place in the parents' schools which contributed to breaking down the barriers separating home and school.
- Activities were offered as an ongoing series rather than a single event.
- Programs offered social and cultural activities which built relationships among parents, children, and teachers to create a sense of community in the school.

PIP programs with these characteristics effectively contributed to breaking down the barriers between home and school and established the school as a community of staff, parents, and children working as partners for the education of children. OREA's evaluation of the 1988-89 PIP program contributes further evidence that building a community of parents, educators, and children at the school level is an effective way to educate children.

Parents benefited because PIP:

- strengthened parents' understanding of school staff and curriculum, enabling them to become involved in their children's education;
- increased parents' social contact and provided peer support;
- empowered parents by providing parenting skills and skills that contributed to their own educational and career development;
- put parents in contact with community resources and service agencies.

Children benefited because PIP:

- enabled children to participate in educational and social activities with their parents and teachers;
- gave children support at home for their school work;
- instilled in children a sense of pride in their parents' involvement and personal development.

Schools benefited because PIP:

- provided additional personnel and support in the school and classroom;
- increased school staff's understanding of problems that interfere with children's learning;
- increased educational support at home.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, OREA offers the following recommendations.

- Streamline the approval and funding process so that PIP begins early enough in the school year to have an impact on parent involvement.
- Establish a school-based coordinator, if not provided, to plan and implement PIP at the school level.
- Arrange a meeting of all PIP coordinators to share experiences and insights.
- Use outreach methods to identify individual parents, especially hard-to-reach parents, and encourage them to attend PIP activities.